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HANGING AND FRAMING PICTURES.

WHEN apartments are devoted entirely to the exhibition of pictures, two or three large works may be placed, as in the picture gallery of the Vatican, in one small room; but in private houses, and for domestic decoration, they should always have relation to the dimensions of the chamber in which they are hung. As large pictures always apparently diminish the size of a small apartment, smaller easel and cabinet pictures have been with good taste preferred for contracted interiors. In the spacious entrance halls and corridors of country mansions, large hunting and sporting subjects and whole-length portraits are appropriately placed. In dining-rooms, also, from the more massive and simple character of the furniture, a few life-sized portraits, together with, of course, subjects of a cheerful and festive character, are admissible. In all cases, the juxtaposition of oil pictures, water-color paintings, and engravings should be avoided; as they greatly injure each other's effect. For the drawing-room, subjects of a refined and elegant character would naturally be chosen; and water-color drawings would form a fitting decoration for a boudoir or an inner drawing-room; while framed prints might be reserved for sleeping apartments.

We see no reason, however, why the possessor of pictures, who has a separate apartment for his books, and a conservatory for his flowers, should not also have a gallery with a suitable light for the proper display of his pictures. At all events, due attention should be paid to the hanging of pictures. The paper of the wall against which pictures are suspended should have no strongly-defined pattern, and should be of one uniform color (red inclining to crimson, or tea-green, are the best colors); and if borders are introduced they should not contain flowers. Bright carpets and all gaudy colors are likewise injurious.

As a general rule, the centre of the picture should not be much above the level of the eye. In an exhibition the pictures in this most favorable situation are said to be on the "line." If the work be a landscape or a portrait with a background, the horizontal line will require to be so placed. The artist, be it remembered, when painting his picture fixes this line (at least theoretically) on a level with his eye—in fact, the two things, the horizontal line and the level of the eye, are identical, and he paints accordingly. If the spectator, therefore, does not regard the picture from the same relative position, much of the work will be foreshortened, and the general effect consequently falsified. Paintings on ceilings are, of course, not subject to these conditions, though they often show a very arbitrary use of the horizontal line. Hanging pictures low has the additional recommendation of increasing the apparent height of an apartment. In viewing pictures, the proper focal distance, determined by their size and style, should be observed.

The extension and repetition of form so conducive to harmony is taken advantage of in the boundary-line; thus the head of a child, or a group, consisting of an assemblage of curved lines, reaches the eye more agreeably through a circular frame; so likewise with the repetitions of form in the square or oblong aperture.

For water-color paintings it is especially important that the frames should not be heavy or too profusely ornamented. A massive frame will almost destroy the effect of delicate work in water-colors. Burnishing small points of the frame is, however, from the greater vivacity of water-colors, less objectionable than when

the frame is intended to inclose an oil picture. The glass of the frame should not touch the face of the painting. The "mount," or margin intervening between the water-color painting and its frame, is almost invariably white; though it might not unfrequently with great advantage be tinted, especially if the painting is merely a vignette. For all delicate work light in tone, a paper mount is preferable; and, for such, a simple gold-bead frame with a gold edge to the mount next the picture is very suitable. But more powerfully and intensely-colored water paintings, especially if warm in tone, might often be rendered far more effective and harmonious by substituting a gold mount. In all cases, however, we recommend to allow the artist to select or advise the

choice of frame for his own work; or to let him know if it is desired that the frame for his picture should match others, in order that he may paint with a view to the influence of the frame.

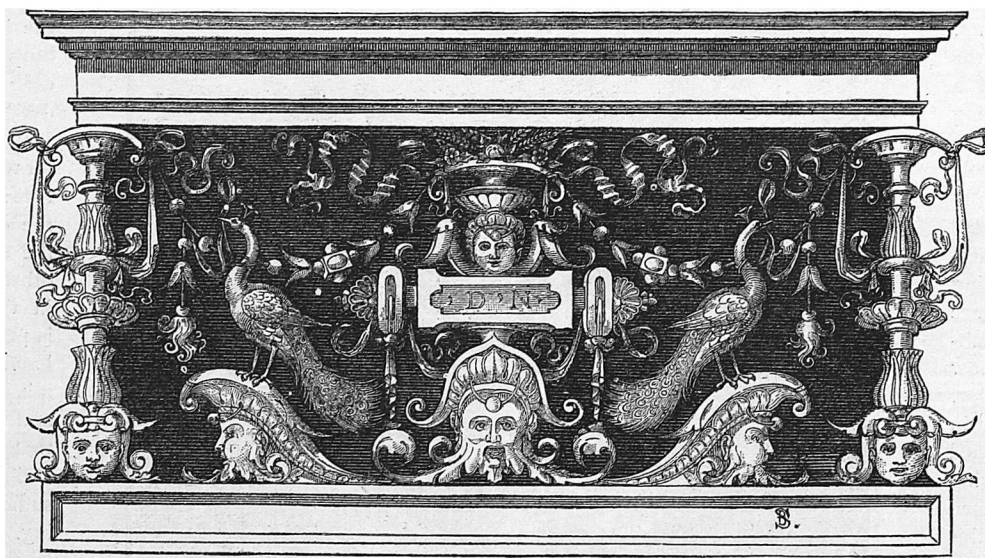
Pictures require light and air; the habit, therefore, of covering up pictures in city houses during the many

months that families are away is very injurious. Washing pictures should be undertaken on a warm, dry day, and nothing but clean cold water should be used. The surface should be wetted with a sponge or soft leather, but the water should never be allowed to float, and all moisture should be carefully removed by gentle friction with an old silk handkerchief. The backs of pictures should be frequently cleaned, and it is desirable to protect them with sheets of tinfoil or oil-skin. The re-lining of pictures is often an excellent precaution for their preservation. The operation of transferring pictures from panel to canvas is too delicate and tedious to be undertaken except for the most valuable works.

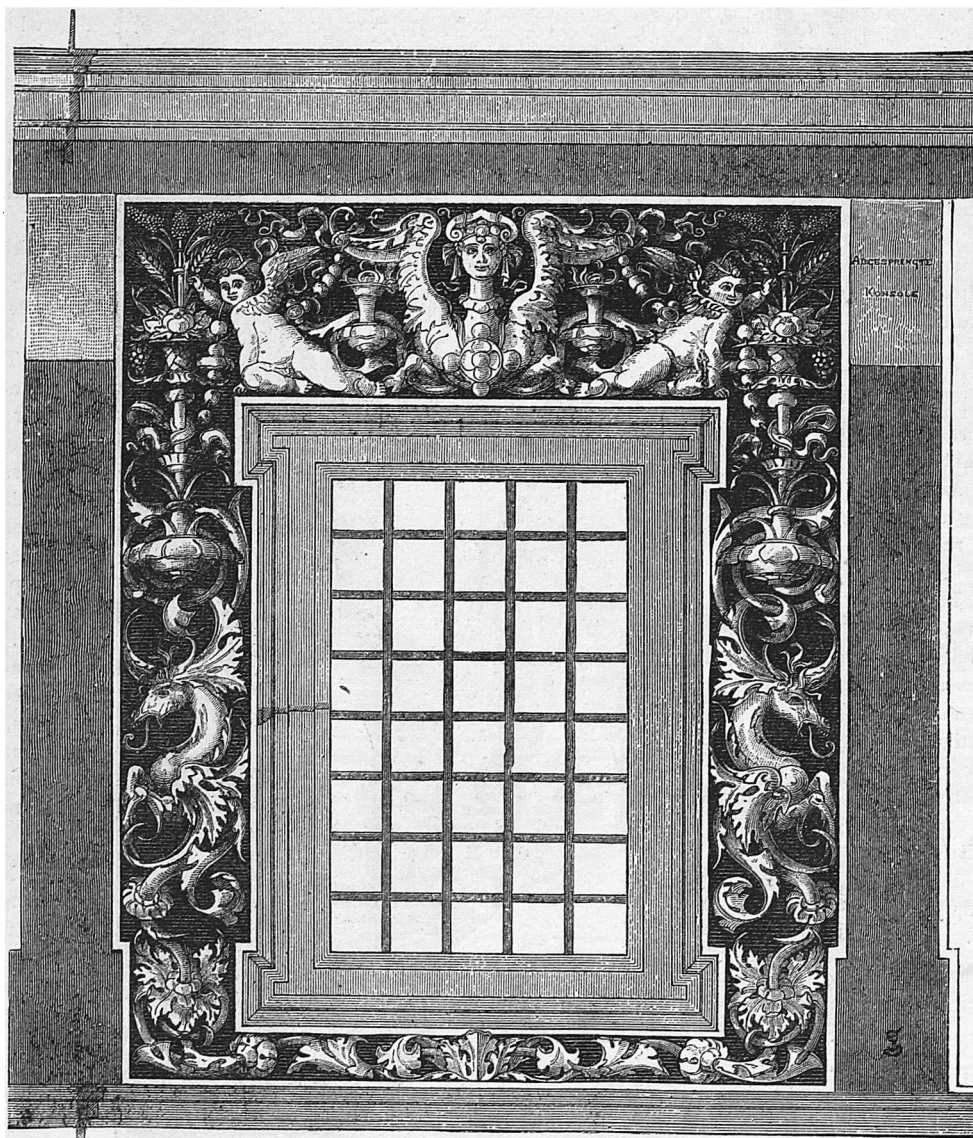
CEILING DECORATION.

IN many houses ceilings have, until late years, been treated simply to a coating or two of whitewash; no trouble has been taken to make them anything more than clean. Most decorators have seemed to consider that with the walls all ornamentation must cease, and when at last the idea dawned upon them that more was required at their hands, it was the cornice that first attracted their attention. This was consequently picked out in all varieties of colors, and still the ceiling remained a dead white, cold and uncompromising. The decoration

of a room, like a picture, will be judged as a whole, and as a whole it is incomplete, until the ceiling space has been so utilized that it may contribute its full share to the color gradations of the general scheme. The several ways in which it may be brought to bear out the artist's conception claim therefore some slight notice.



SGRAFFITO DECORATION OF A WINDOW CAP IN THE CORSI PALACE.



SGRAFFITO DECORATION AROUND A WINDOW IN THE CORSI PALACE.

lateral light, the pictures should never slant as if toppling over. Pictures should not be suspended from one nail; the diagonal lines formed by the cord have a very discordant effect. Two nails and two vertical cords, or, what is far more safe, pieces of wire cordage, should always be employed instead of the single cord.